

NSC BRIEFING

11 February 1959

CYPRUS

- I. Announcement on 11 February that agreement had been reached in Zurich between Greek and Turkish leaders on a compromise settlement of the Cyprus problem does not necessarily mean that the problem ended.

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B. Archbishop Makarios has expressed general satisfaction with the negotiations and will probably accept the final agreement.

1. A few intransigent Greek Cypriots, however, possibly including some terrorist elements on Cyprus, may reject the settlement and attempt to continue to cause trouble.

II. Political composition of a future independent government of Cyprus may involve eventual dangers for Western interests.

A. Cyprus has a large, well-organized Communist Party and one of its sources of strength is the nearly total lack of an organized opposition.

III. The agreement apparently includes the following major provisions:

A. An independent Cypriot republic with a Greek Cypriot President and a Turkish Cypriot Vice President, both exercising a veto over matters involving foreign affairs, defense or the constitution.

1. The constitution, specifically prohibiting union of Cyprus with Greece or Turkey, would be guaranteed by London, Athens, and Ankara.

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- B. A single chamber legislature whose membership would be 70% Greek and 30% Turkish.
- C. Continuation of British military bases and permission for Greece and Turkey to station small numbers of troops on Cyprus.

IV. Reasons for the present agreement apparently include:

- A. Realization in Greece that solution of the issue favorable to Greece would not come from further discussions in the UN.
- B. Desire of the Greek government leaders to resolve an issue threatening Greek ties with NATO and the West and the need to concentrate attention on internal issues due to the p recent rise of Communist support among the electorate.
- C. Ankara's need to concentrate on continuing domestic problems.
 - 1. In addition, fear that the Baghdad Pact is weakening and realization that Turkey is surrounded by weak or hostile states made a rapprochement with Greece strategically desirable.